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Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund

**ASB**  
**GEORGIA**  
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# WE ARE

We are Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund, but people call us ASB. We come from Germany and have a long history, to be more accurate - 131 years of work. Initially, we started our activities in Georgia in 90s. We were running a humanitarian aid mission to help people affected by the war and poverty. We provided more than **7,500,000 EUR** worth of aid and supported more than **34,000** people until 1997.

In 2010, we re-entered Georgia with a different mission, focusing on the activities of strengthening social services, support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and engaged in the activities that built resilience and inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (iDRR), also supported the Georgian Samaritan Association (SSK). Since 2010, the ASB has implemented **24** projects and spent more than **5,800,000 EUR**. In total, we reached more than **750,000** people throughout Georgia.

We implement the projects funded by the European Union (EU), UN, the U.S. Government, and the Canadian Government, aiming at strengthening the local community, supporting protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disability, increasing self-resilience, and building confidence across the communities divided by conflict, enhancing civic participation and partnerships in local social policymaking processes, empowering women, strengthening gender equality in Georgia, and supporting civil protection and humanitarian aid operations through enhancing cross-border cooperation between Georgia and Armenia during emergencies.

## IN 2021, WE IMPLEMENTED THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:



Partnership for  
Inclusive Policy-Making  
(PPSP)



'Stronger Together'  
- Cooperative Action to  
Respond to Cross-Border  
Emergencies



Equal Opportunities  
for Persons with  
Disabilities



Employment of  
Persons  
with Disabilities



Safe Environment  
for Women

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**The global pandemic** had a significant negative impact on the project activities planned for 2021. However, ASB Georgia has successfully managed to adapt its project activities to the new reality.

photo credit: ASB Deutschland/WELTERS

WE  
ARE  
READY

# PARTNERSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING

Aims to increase civic participation and partnerships at the local level. Strengthening the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and promoting public-private social partnerships are the two objectives to achieve the above-mentioned goal.

In the framework of the project, the Caucasus Caregiver Cooperation (CCC) Network was strengthened and the capacity building of each member of the network was carried out. CCC network provides high-quality, accessible social services to fully realize the rights and opportunities of the most vulnerable groups in society.



## IN 2021, SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE PROJECT:

**Delivery of capacity-building packages was continued to CCC network organizations;**

**The initiatives of 10 CSOs were supported to promote civic participation at the local level;**

**10 workshops were organized on advocacy and lobbying.**



**#THEFUTUREINYOURHANDS**

# SUCCESS STORY

## #THEFUTUREINYOURHANDS - History of Family-Type Houses



***“I have a child with a disability, when I thought about my son’s future, I realized that although presently he was surrounded by care from the family members, in the future, when we would not be able to be by his side anymore, what would happen to him? Who would replace our care and support?”***

*Maia Shishniashvili*

That’s how the idea of establishing family-type houses was born to create an environment similar to a home for the persons with disability (PWDS). It was necessary to create a service model, which would be offered to the State that, in turn, would become a supporter and a guarantor of this service.

A family-type house is a family-friendly environment where people with disabilities have the opportunity to live, and receive care and services that they would receive in a family environment. Unlike large institutions such as shelters for people with disabilities and psychiatric hospitals, these people are not excluded from society, on the contrary, they are given maximum support to be independent, to demonstrate and develop their skills, to get employed and realize their abilities like full members of society. The first such family-type house in Georgia and the post-Soviet space was created in Gurjaani. The building where the first such family-type house was created belonged to the author and initiator of this idea, Maia Shishniashvili, the Head of “Hand in Hand” - the organization supporting social inclusion.

A donor supporting this idea soon emerged, who believed in the idea and trusted the organizing group; however, the funds were not sufficient to buy housing, which led Maia to allocate her own house to the cause. In the meantime, the organization “Hand in Hand” became a member of the CCC network, where the NGO was supported with different necessary training and advocacy workshops.

Three years after the opening of the first house, when it became clear that the model was working successfully, the NGO “Hand in Hand”, led by Maia



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**A family-type house is a family-friendly environment where people with disabilities**

have the opportunity to live, and receive care and services that they would receive in a family environment.

Shishniashvili, along with the movement of parents of children with disabilities, began advocating for the State to recognize the model and set standards for its realization.

There is a sub-component of community housing in the State Program, according to which 24 people can live in this type of housing, but the idea and purpose of family-type housing was to introduce differentiated standards - this type of house has a maximum of 5-6 people living there, which creates the environment similar to that of a family. As it was the first family-type house, its legal status did not yet exist in the national regulations, thus "Hand in Hand" participated in the program and received funding as a community housing project.

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***"We have always emphasized that we were a family-type dwelling. I was asked why I wanted to change this status, as it did not hinder me in my activities, however, defining the relevant status is very important. In order to replicate this model, a relevant status was needed."***

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*An advocacy campaign has begun to work on the status change. This process was facilitated by the fact that for the Monitoring Groups of the Ministry, the changes that these people experienced under similar support conditions, as well as how their degree*

*of independence increased, became very visible. Eventually, the law was amended by the Order of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, and the status of this type of housing appeared in the law with the title - "family type, independent living supportive housing for PWDs".*

*The change in the law was a major victory. There was no discussion on increasing funding at that time, granting status was a priority. Which was already a guarantee of quality.*

*Finally, with the involvement and support of the parents of the children with disabilities, and as a result of a well-led advocacy campaign by the social inclusion support organization, "Hand in Hand" and its Head Maia Shishniashvili, a decision was made in December 2018 to increase daily funding for independent living supporting family-type housing for PWDs from 16 GEL to 30 GEL.*

At this stage, there are 5 family-type houses in Georgia - three of them in Kakheti and the remaining two in Tbilisi. Each house has 5-6 family members. Each family has an assistant, not a supervisor or nanny, but an assistant who supports PWDs to enjoy fulfilling and independent living conditions.



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# STRONGER TOGETHER

## A Cooperative Action to Respond to Cross-Border Emergencies

Aims to enhance the disaster risk management system with a special focus on health emergencies in Armenia and Georgia through capacity building and establishing cross-border cooperation mechanisms.

At the end of the project, the Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) will be established in Georgia and Armenia, which

will pass the WHO global classification process. The EMTs will respond to disasters more effectively. Besides, cross-border cooperation during emergencies between Armenia and Georgia will be enhanced.



**PROJECT DONOR:**

European Commission (EC),  
Directorate-General for European  
Civil, Protection and Humanitarian  
Aid Operations (ECHO)

**PROJECT DURATION:**

2 years (2021-2023)

**PROJECT LOCATION:**

Georgia and Armenia

## IN 2021, SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE PROJECT:

**Needs Assessment for the Establishment and Functioning of Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) was carried out in Georgia and Armenia;**

**The Georgian and Armenian EMTs submitted an expression of interest to join the WHO Global EMT list;**

**ASB Georgia became a member of the legal working groups in both countries;**

**Internal Action Plan development workshops were organized in Armenia and Georgia.**



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

## SUPPORTING SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS IN RURAL GEORGIA

Aims to support the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. The project is in line with the adopted Action Plan 2014-2016 on the Provision of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability by the Government of Georgia. The action builds on the principles of protecting the rights of persons with disabilities defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, signed and ratified by the Government of Georgia.

The experience accumulated over several years of implementing the socio-economic and integration activities aiming at advocating the rights of persons with disabilities enables the ASB Georgia and its partners - Education Development and Employment Center and Movement Accessible Environment for Everyone, to use their expertise for supporting Social Service Providers in rural Georgia.

### PROJECT DONOR:

European Union (EU)

### PROJECT DURATION:

3 years (2018-2021)

### PROJECT LOCATION:

All over Georgia

## IN 2021, SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WERE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN THE PROJECT:

**A new service “Disabled to Disabled” was designed and implemented in three municipalities of Georgia (Mestia, Marneuli, and Sachkhere-Tchiatura municipalities);**

**A Guidebook on the rights of persons with disabilities and available services for PWDs, CSOs/ DPOs, and local authorities was developed;**

**8 Public-Private Social partnerships formed between DPOs/CSOs/Private Sector and Local government and running services;**



The trainings were conducted for DPOs/CSOs on the tools of public participation in decision-making on disability inclusion;

The trainings were conducted for the women living in rural areas. The training module aimed to encourage women to initiate advocacy campaigns and get involved in the decision-making processes at the local level.



# EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE IN BORJOMI

Aims to create an inclusive environment for the persons with disabilities to increase their livelihood opportunities by supporting their employment at a greenhouse. In addition, the project aims to eliminate the negative effects of deforestation caused by the fires and the climate change in Borjomi Gorge,

through various project-related activities. The Consortium consists of Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB), National Forestry Agency, local government, San Diego University, Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park, Local Media, and the private sector will support project implementation.

## PROJECT DONOR:

The GEF Small Grant Programme

## PROJECT DURATION:

a year (2020-2021)

## PROJECT LOCATION:

Borjomi, Georgia

## IN 2021, SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE PROJECT:

### The nursery project was prepared by an expert.

A "classroom" for seedlings was arranged. 10 beneficiaries of 'Tebe' center were directly involved in the withdrawal process. In total, saplings of 20 birch, 20 Caucasian pines, 10 European pines, and 20 endemic spruces (local) were planted;

### 5-day training on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction was conducted for the staff of the 'Tebe' center.



# SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN

Aims to address GBV among the internally displaced communities, as well as the conflict-affected and host community in Georgia by Improving the livelihood

opportunities for the GBV survivors and building the capacity of public servants and caregivers (80 police officers, 180 school teachers, and 40 caregivers).

## PROJECT DONOR:

Government of Canada

## PROJECT DURATION:

a year (2020-2021)

## PROJECT LOCATION:

Tbilisi, Samegrelo, Abkhazia (Gali)

## IN 2021, SEVERAL IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WERE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE PROJECT:

The shop located on the territory of the shelter for women survivors managed by the project partner organization AVNG was rehabilitated. The shop sells bakery products and flowers produced by the women's shelter beneficiaries;

Online Workshops were conducted for the policemen on legal regulations on sexual harassment and police response mechanisms, legal procedures to combat domestic and gender-based violence, and effective legal proceedings offering the survivor-oriented approaches;

Online conferences were organized for the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs about the importance of public involvement in the process of proactive identification and effective investigation of crimes related to child marriage, the necessity of strengthened coordination among the relevant governmental institutions, review of the legal acts regulating violence against women and domestic violence;

**The Guidebooks were developed and disseminated for:**

- School teachers on the prevention of violence against children;
- Police officers on legal mechanisms to respond to the cases of domestic violence against women;
- Shelter personnel on respective laws / legal regulations.

**Online training were conducted for:**

- 72 policemen on the obligations envisaged by the international conventions ratified by Georgia, National Monitoring Mechanism and an overview of governmental institutions responsible for its implementation;
- 186 school teachers from Zugdidi, Poti, Khobi, Tsalenjikha, Chkhorotsku, Abasha, Senaki, Rukhi and Gali to sensitize them on the issues of domestic and gender-based violence. The teachers were equipped with the knowledge on legal mechanisms to prevent violence against children and juveniles;
- 40 shelter personnel working in various shelters throughout Georgia on the following topics: practical tools of communication to be used for the improvement of daily work efficiency of shelter personnel, stress reduction techniques, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, and time management.



# SAKARTVELO'S SAMARITELTA KAVSHIRI (SSK)

SSK was founded in Georgia, in 1992, with the initiative of the ASB. In the 1990s the two organizations worked closely mostly in the humanitarian field. The close partnership continues to this day, now with joint social projects.

Since 2013, Sakartvelos Samaritelta Kavshiri (SSK) has been implementing the Children's Early Development Program in the village of Kavshiri, Lagodekhi Municipality. The program is based on the so called "Portage" methodology. In 2015, SSK was officially registered as a provider of Children's Early Development services. On October 1, 2017,

SSK launched similar services in the town of Gori and in August 2019 the organization was registered as a service provider in Gori and nearby villages, with the financial support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the Austrian foundation AMINA and ASB Germany. The third early intervention service of SSK was established in Mestia, in 2019. The project will last for a year and intends to reach a maximum of 20 beneficiaries. The Children's Early Development Program voucher funding system guarantees financial sustainability of the project.

**IN 2021, SSK SUCCESSFULLY DELIVERED  
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS:**

**Home-care  
service for  
elder persons  
in Gori;**

**Early  
intervention  
service in  
Lagodekhi;**

**Speech  
Therapy Center  
„Communicator“  
in Tbilisi;**

**Judo for  
vulnerable  
children and  
the youth in  
Pankisi;**

**Early  
intervention  
service  
in Gori.**

The sustainability of all the current projects is guaranteed.



Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund